

# **PS239: Formal Models of Political Development**

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Course details:  
Spring 2019. Barrows Hall 791.  
Class time: Tuesday, 11:00 - 1:00.

## **Course Description and Objectives**

Across the substantive fields of political science, scholars try to ascertain why the political world looks like it does. A large portion of this inquiry is about the institutions that comprise the political world. We would like to know where these institutions came from, when and why they are stable, how and why they change, and how we can promote the ones we like. Political development pertains to these questions of change and stability in political institutions.

In this course we will explore how formal theory has contributed to this discussion, as well as important elements of political development which formal theory has so far overlooked. Since change and stability occur in time, most of our readings emphasize particular historical contexts in which some specific development occurred. We can and should critique the representation of that history whenever possible. However, our primary focus is theoretical: how do we think about development using the methods of formal theory, and how can we do it better?

This is a Ph.D.-level course. It is an elective in the formal theory sequence. This course will develop students' ability to read and critique formal models, and to apply formal theory to analyze important political developments in their own areas of research.

## **Format**

The class sessions will mix presentation of papers with seminar-style discussions of the papers, their models, and their substantive contributions. Since this is officially a methodology class, we will focus in depth on the models, how they work, and how well they express key political conditions.

## **Readings**

The readings will consist mostly of journal articles and books with a few working papers mixed in. They are listed below for each session. Readings will be distributed as either links or PDF documents via email. Several books are on the reading list but you

will not have to purchase any. Most are available as e-books through the UC library; I will email a pre-publication proof of mine.

IMPORTANT NOTE. As befits an advanced Ph.D. seminar, this course covers an evolving field with no standard canon. I would like to expand my own awareness of what is in the literature, and to incorporate papers that students find interesting. If you know of a paper on political development that is not on the schedule below, and contains a model, please let me know. I am particularly interested in papers by women and scholars of color.

## Requirements, Expectations, and Grading

All of the models in this course are based on noncooperative game theory. It is important to have some grasp of game theory to fully understand the material. Treatment at the level of PS 232A-B is ideal; 232A alone is adequate.

The requirements of the course are as follows.

1. In order for class presentation and discussion to be useful, it is imperative that students read the assigned papers at least once before each session (week 1 excepted). It might also be instructive to read them again after the session.
2. Each student will lead the class for one week. This will involve presenting one paper from that week's readings in detail and leading discussion of the week's readings. The instructor will do the presentations in the remaining weeks. We will divide readings/sessions among students in the first class session.
3. When not presenting, students are expected to be fully and constructively engaged in discussion and critique of the models presented. In this class and every other, to "critique" does not mean to "savage" or "destroy." It means to give a balanced assessment of what worked in a model, what did not, what was overlooked, and what can be improved.
4. Each student must submit a final paper by the end of reading week. It must be at least 15 pages double spaced with 1 inch margins. It should identify an important case of development in your research area, review other research that explains this development (or similar ones in other contexts), and sketch an original model that can add something to that explanation. *Students should schedule an appointment to meet with me to talk about the paper before spring break.*

Each of these components will count equally in the final course grade.

## Schedule

The week-by-week reading schedule is below. Note that we will not have class on March 26 (spring break) or April 2 (instructor out of town).

## 1. Introduction.

- Gailmard, S (2019). Game Theory and the Study of American Political Development. Working paper.
- Pierson, P. and T. Skocpol (2002). Historical institutionalism in contemporary political science. In I. Katznelson and H. Milner (Eds.), *Political science: The state of the discipline*, pp. 693–721. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Healy, K. (2017). Fuck Nuance. *Sociological Theory* 35, 118–127.

## 2. Democracy as a commitment

- Acemoglu, D. and J. A. Robinson (2000). Why did the west extend the franchise? democracy, inequality, and growth in historical perspective. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 115(4), 1167–1199.
- Boix, C. (2002). *Democracy and Redistribution*. Princeton University Press (selections).
- Lizzeri, A. and N. Persico (2004). Why did the Elites Extend the Suffrage? Democracy and the Scope of Government, with an Application to Britain’s ‘Age of Reform.’ *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 119 2(1), 707–765.

## 3. Self-enforcing democracy

- Fearon, J. D. (2011). Self-enforcing democracy. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 126 (4), 1661–1708.
- Little, A., J. Tucker, and T. LaGatta (2015). Elections, Protest, and Alternation of Power. *Journal of Politics* 77(4): 1142–1156.

## 4. Self-enforcing rule of law (M. Lee)

- Weingast, B. R. (1997). The political foundations of democracy and the rule of the law. *American political science review* 91(2), 245–263.
- Tyson, S (2019). The Strategic Foundations of Political Sovereignty. *Journal of Politics* 81 (forthcoming).

## 5. Self-enforcing institutions

- Defigueiredo, R. and B. R. Weingast (2005). Self-enforcing federalism. *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 21(1), 103–135.
- Dragu, T. and M. Polborn (2013). The Administrative Foundation of the Rule of Law. *Journal of Politics* 75(4): 1038–1050.

6. Legislative power (D. Foster)

- North, D. and B. R. Weingast (1989). *Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England*. *Journal of Economic History* 49(4), 803–832.
- Stasavage, D. (2011). *States of Credit: Size, Power, and the Development of European Polities*. Princeton University Press.

7. Bureaucracies (J. Kim)

- McCubbins, M., R. Noll, and B. R. Weingast (1987). *Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control*. *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 3, 243–277.
- Gailmard, S. and J. W. Patty (2007). *Slackers and zealots: Civil service, policy discretion, and bureaucratic expertise*. *American Journal of Political Science* 51(4), 873–889.
- Gailmard, S. and J. W. Patty (2012). *Learning While Governing: Information and Accountability in the Executive Branch*. University of Chicago Press.
- Gailmard, S. (2002). *Expertise, Subversion, and Bureaucratic Discretion*. *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 18(2), 536–555.

8. British imperial governance and the United States.

- Gailmard, S. (2017). *Building a new imperial state: The strategic foundations of separation of powers in America*. *American Political Science Review* 111(4), 668–685.
- Gailmard, S. (2018). *Imperial politics, english law, and the strategic foundations of constitutional review in America*. UC Berkeley Typescript.
- Gailmard, S. (2019). *Laws of war: The growth of legislative power in America*. UC Berkeley Typescript .

9. State capacity I (P. Gupta)

- Besley, T. and T. Persson (2012). Pillars of Prosperity: The Political Economics of Development Clusters. Princeton University Press. Chapter 2.
- Gennaioli, N. and J. Voth (2015). State Capacity and military conflict. *Review of Economic Studies* 82, 1409-1448.

10. State capacity II (A. McCall)

- Besley, T. and T. Persson (2012). Pillars of Prosperity: The Political Economics of Development Clusters. Princeton University Press. Chapter 3.
- Besley, T. and T. Persson (2012). Pillars of Prosperity: The Political Economics of Development Clusters. Princeton University Press. Chapter 4.
- Simpson, H. (2019). Access to Justice in Revenue Seeking Institutions. Working paper.

11. States and security (J. Warren)

- Acharya, A. and A. Lee (2018). Economic Foundations of the Territorial State System. *American Journal of Political Science* 62(4), 954–66.
- Debs, A. and N. Monteiro (2019). An Economic Theory of War. *Journal of Politics*.

12. Norms, Identities, and Values (J. Li)

- Shayo, M. (2009). A Model of Social Identity with an Application to Political Economy: Nation, Class, and Redistribution. *American Political Science Review* 103(2), 147–174.
- Penn, E. M. (2016). Inequality, Social Context, and Value Divergence. *Journal of Politics* 79(1), 153–165.
- Larson, J. M. (2017). Why the west became wild: Informal governance with incomplete networks. *World Politics* 69(4), 713–749.

13. Path dependence and policymaking (A. Benn)

- Callander, S. (2011). Searching for Good Policies. *American Political Science Review* 105(4), 643–662.
- Page, S. E. (2006). Path Dependence. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 1(1): 87–115.
- Bednar, J. and S. E. Page (2018). When Order Affects Performance. *American Political Science Review* 112(1), 82–98.